

R E M A R K S
ON THE
SPEECH of M. DUPONT,
MADE IN THE
NATIONAL CONVENTION OF FRANCE,
ON THE SUBJECTS OF
Religion and Public Education.

By HANNAH MORE.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL IN THE STRAND.

M DCC XCIH.

[Price Two Shillings and Sixpence.]

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☛ *The Profits of this Publication are to be given
to the FRENCH EMIGRANT CLERGY.*

*** It is hoped the high Price of this Pamphlet
will be excused, in consideration of the Object to
which it is dedicated.



A

Prefatory Address

TO THE

LADIES, &c. of GREAT BRITAIN,

IN BEHALF OF THE

FRENCH EMIGRANT CLERGY.

IF it be allowed that there may arise occasions so extraordinary, that all the lesser motives of delicacy ought to vanish before them ; it is presumed that the present emergency will in some measure justify the hardness of an Address from a private individual, who, stimulated by the urgency of the case, sacrifices inferior considerations

to the ardent desire of raising further supplies towards relieving a distress as pressing as it is unexampled.

We are informed by public advertisement, that the large sums already so liberally subscribed for the Emigrant Clergy are almost exhausted. Authentic information adds, that multitudes of distressed Exiles in the island of Jersey, are on the point of wanting bread.

Very many to whom this Address is made have already contributed. O let them not be weary in well-doing! Many are making generous exertions for the just and natural claims of the widows and children of our brave seamen and soldiers. Let it not be said, that the present is an *interfering* claim. Those to whom I write, have bread enough, and to spare. You, who fare sumptuously every day, and yet complain you have little to bestow, let not this bounty be
subtracted

subtracted from another bounty, but rather from some superfluous expence.

The beneficent and right-minded want no arguments to be pressed upon them ; but I write to those of every description. Luxurious habits of living, which really furnish the distressed with the fairest grounds for application, are too often urged as a motive for withholding assistance, and produced as a plea for having little to spare. Let her who indulges such habits, and pleads such excuses in consequence, reflect, that by retrenching *one* costly dish from her abundant table, the superfluities of *one* expensive desert, *one* evening's public amusement, she may furnish at least a week's subsistence to more than one person *, as liberally bred perhaps as herself, and who,

* Mr. Bowdler's letter states, that about Six Shillings a week includes the expences of each Priest at Winchester.

in his own country, may have often tasted how much more blessed it is to give than to receive — to a minister of God, who has been long accustomed to bestow the necessaries he is now reduced to solicit.

Even your young daughters, whom maternal prudence has not yet furnished with the means of bestowing, may be cheaply taught the first rudiments of charity, together with an important lesson of œconomy: they may be taught to sacrifice a feather, a set of ribbons, an expensive ornament, an idle diversion. And if they are thus instructed, that there is no true charity without self-denial, they will *gain* more than they are called upon to *give*: for the suppression of one luxury for a charitable purpose, is the exercise of two virtues, and this without any pecuniary expence.

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Let the sick and afflicted remember how dreadful it must be, to be exposed to sufferings, without one of the alleviations which mitigate *their* affliction. How dreadful it is to be without comforts, without necessities, without a home,—*without a country!* While the gay and prosperous would do well to recollect, how suddenly and terribly those for whom we plead, were, by the surprising vicissitudes of life, thrown from equal heights of gaiety and prosperity. And let those who have husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, or friends, reflect on the uncertainties of war, and the revolution of human affairs. It is only by imagining the possibility of those who are dear to us being placed in the same calamitous circumstances, that we can obtain an adequate feeling of the woes we are called upon to commiserate.

In a distress so wide and comprehensive, many are prevented from giving by that

common excuse—" That it is but a drop of water in the ocean." But let them reflect, that if all the individual drops were withheld, there would be no ocean at all ; and the inability to give much ought not, on any occasion, to be converted into an excuse for giving nothing. Even moderate circumstances need not plead an exemption. The industrious tradesman will not, even in a political view, be eventually a loser by his small contribution. The money raised is neither carried out of our country, nor dissipated in luxuries, but returns again to the community ; to our shops and to our markets, to procure the bare necessities of life.

Some have objected to the difference of *religion* of those for whom we solicit. Such an objection hardly deserves a serious answer. Surely if the superstitious Tartar hopes to become possessed of the courage and talents of the enemy he slays, the
Christian

Christian is not afraid of catching, or of propagating the error of the sufferer he relieves.—Christian charity is of no party. We plead not for their faith, but for their wants. And let the more scrupulous, who look for desert as well as distress in the objects of their bounty, bear in mind, that if these men could have sacrificed their conscience to their convenience, they had not now been in this country. Let us shew them the purity of *our* religion, by the beneficence of our actions.

If you will permit me to press upon you such high motives, (and it were to be wished that in every action we were to be influenced by the highest,) perhaps no act of bounty to which you may be called out, can ever come so immediately under that solemn and affecting description, which will be recorded in the great day of account,—*I was a stranger, and ye took me in.*——

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*The following is an exact Translation from a
SPEECH made in the National Conven-
tion at Paris, on Friday the 14th of De-
cember 1792, in a Debate on the Subject
of establishing Public Schools for the Edu-
cation of Youth, by Citizen DUPONT, a
Member of considerable Weight; and as
the Doctrines contained in it were received
with unanimous Applause, except from two
or three of the Clergy, it may be fairly
considered as an Exposition of the Creed of
that Enlightened Assembly. Translated from
Le Moniteur of Sunday the 16th of De-
cember 1792.*

WHAT! Thrones are overturned!
Sceptres broken! Kings expire!
And yet the Altars of GOD remain! (Here
there is a murmur from some Members;
and the Abbé ICHON demands that the
person speaking may be called to order.)
Tyrants,

Tyrants, in outrage to nature, continue to burn an impious incense on those Altars! (Some murmurs arise, but they are lost in the applauses from the majority of the Assembly.) The Thrones that have been reversed, have left these Altars naked, unsupported, and tottering. A single breath of enlightened reason will now be sufficient to make them disappear; and if humanity is under obligations to the French nation for the first of these benefits, the fall of Kings, can it be doubted but that the French people, now sovereign, will be wise enough, in like manner, to overthrow those Altars and *those Idols* to which those Kings have hitherto made them subject? *Nature* and *Reason*, these ought to be the gods of men! These are my gods! (Here the Abbé AUDREIN cried out, "There is no bearing this;" and rushed out of the Assembly.—A great laugh.) Admire *nature*—cultivate *reason*.—And you, Legislators, if you desire that the French people should be happy,

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py, make haste to propagate these principles, and to teach them in your primary schools, instead of those fanatical principles which have hitherto been taught. The tyranny of Kings was confined to make their people miserable in this life—but those other tyrants, the Priests, extend their dominion into another, of which they have no other idea than of eternal punishments; a doctrine which some men have hitherto had the good nature to believe. But the moment of the catastrophe is come—all these prejudices must fall at the same time. *We must destroy them, or they will destroy us.*—For myself, I honestly avow to the Convention, *I am an atheist!* (Here there is some noise and tumult. But a great number of members cry out, “What is that to us—you are an honest man!”) But I defy a single individual, amongst the twenty-four millions of Frenchmen, to make against me any well-grounded reproach. I doubt whether the Christians,
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or the Catholics, of which the last speaker, and those of his opinion, have been talking to us, can make the same challenge.—(Great applauses.) There is another consideration—Paris has had great losses. It has been deprived of the commerce of luxury ; of that factitious splendour which was found at courts, and invited strangers hither. Well ! We must repair these losses.—Let me then represent to you the times, that are fast approaching, when our philosophers, whose names are celebrated throughout Europe, PETION, SYEYES, CONDORCET, and others—surrounded in our Pantheon, as the Greek philosophers were at Athens, with a crowd of disciples coming from all parts of Europe, walking like the Peripatetics, and teaching—this man, the system of the universe, and developing the progress of all human knowledge ; that, perfecting the social system, and shewing in our decree of the 17th of June 1789, the seeds of the insurrec-

tions of the 14th of July, and the 10th of August, and of all those insurrections which are spreading with such rapidity throughout Europe—so that these young strangers, on their return to their respective countries, may spread the same lights, and may operate, *for the happiness of mankind*, similar revolutions throughout the world.

(Numberless applauses arose, almost throughout the whole Assembly, and in the Galleries.)

REMARKS



R E M A R K S
ON THE
SPEECH of Mr. DUPONT,
ON THE SUBJECTS OF
Religion and Public Education.

IT is presumed that it may not be thought unseasonable at this critical time to offer to the Public, and especially to the more religious part of it, a few flight observations, occasioned by the late famous Speech of Mr. Dupont, which exhibits the Confession of Faith of a considerable Member of the French National Convention. Though

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the Speech itself has been pretty generally read, yet it was thought necessary to prefix it to these Remarks, lest such as have not already perused it, might, from an honest reluctance to credit the existence of such principles, dispute its authenticity, and accuse the Remarks, if unaccompanied by the Speech, of a spirit of invective and unfair exaggeration. At the same time it must be confessed, that its impiety is so monstrous, that many good men were of opinion it ought not to be made familiar to the minds of Englishmen ; for there are crimes with which even the imagination should never come in contact.

But as an ancient nation intoxicated their slaves, and then exposed them before their children, in order to increase their horror of intemperance ; so it is hoped that this piece of impiety may be placed in such a light before the eyes of the Christian reader, that, in proportion as his detestation is raised,

raised, his faith, instead of being shaken, will be only so much the more strengthened.

This celebrated Speech, though delivered in an assembly of Politicians, is not on a question of politics, but on one as superior as the soul is to the body, and eternity to time. The object here, is not to dethrone kings, but HIM by whom kings reign. It does not here excite the cry of indignation that *Louis* reigns, but that *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*.

Nor is this the declaration of some obscure and anonymous person, but an exposition of the Creed of a public Leader. It is not a sentiment hinted in a journal, hazarded in a pamphlet, or thrown out at a disputing club ; but it is the implied faith of the rulers of a great nation.

Little notice would have been due to this famous Speech, if it had conveyed the sen-

timents of only *one* vain orator; but it should be observed, that it was heard, received, *applauded*, with two or three exceptions only—a fact, which you, who have scarcely believed in the existence of atheism, will hardly credit, and which, for the honour of the eighteenth century, it is hoped that our posterity, being still more unacquainted with such corrupt opinions, will reject as totally incredible.

A love of liberty, generous in its principle, inclines some good men still to favour the proceedings of the National Convention of France. They do not yet perceive that the licentious wildness which has been excited in that country, is destructive of all true happiness, and no more resembles liberty, than the tumultuous joys of the drunkard resemble the cheerfulness of a sober and well-regulated mind.

To those who do not know of what strange inconsistencies man is made up;
 who

who have not considered how some persons, having at first been hastily and heedlessly drawn in as approvers, by a sort of natural progression, soon become principals ; —to those who have never observed by what a variety of strange associations in the mind, opinions that seem the most irreconcilable meet at some unsuspected turning, and come to be united in the same man ; —to all such it may appear quite incredible, that well-meaning and even pious people should continue to applaud the principles of a set of men who have publicly made known their intention of abolishing Christianity, as far as the demolition of altars, priests, temples, and institutions, *can* abolish it ; and as to the religion itself, this also they may traduce, and for their own part reject, but we know, from the comfortable promise of an authority still sacred in this country at least, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Let me not be misunderstood by those to whom these slight remarks are principally addressed; that class of well-intentioned people, who favour at least, if they do not adopt, the prevailing sentiments of the new Republic. You are not here accused of being the wilful abettors of infidelity. God forbid! "we are persuaded better things of you, and things which accompany salvation." But this *ignis fatuus* of liberty and universal brotherhood, which the French are madly pursuing, with the insignia of freedom in one hand, and the bloody bayonet in the other, has bewitched your senses, and is in danger of misleading your steps. You are gazing at a meteor raised by the vapours of vanity, which these wild and infatuated wanderers are pursuing to their destruction; and though for a moment you mistake it for a heaven-born light, which leads to the perfection of human freedom, you will, should you join in the mad pursuit, soon discover that
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it will conduct you over dreary wilds and sinking bogs, only to plunge you in deep and inevitable ruin.

Much, very much is to be said in vindication of your favouring in the first instance their political projects. The cause they took in hand seemed to be the great cause of human kind. Its very name insured its popularity. What English heart did not exult at the demolition of the Bastile? What lover of his species did not triumph in the warm hope, that one of the finest countries in the world would soon be one of the most free? Popery and despotism, though chained by the gentle influence of Louis the sixteenth, had actually slain their thousands. Little was it then imagined, that anarchy and atheism, the monsters who were about to succeed them, would soon slay their ten thousands. If we cannot regret the defeat of the two former tyrants, what must they be who can triumph in the mischiefs of the two latter? Who, I say,

that had a head to reason, or a heart to feel, did not glow with the hope, that from the ruins of tyranny, and the rubbish of popery, a beautiful and finely-framed edifice would in time have been constructed, and that ours would not have been the only country in which the patriots' fair idea of well-understood liberty, and of the most pure and reasonable, as well as the most sublime and exalted Christianity, might be realized?

But, alas! it frequently happens that the wise and good are not the most adventurous in attacking the mischiefs which they perceive and lament. With a timidity in some respects virtuous, they fear attempting any thing which may possibly aggravate the evils they deplore, or put to hazard the blessings they already enjoy. They dread plucking up the wheat with the tares, and are rather apt, with a spirit of hopeless resignation,

“ To bear the ills they have,
“ Than fly to others that they know not of.”

While

While sober-minded and considerate men, therefore, sat mourning over this complicated mass of error, and waited till God, in his own good time, should open the blind eyes; the vast scheme of reformation was left to that set of rash and presumptuous adventurers, who are generally watching how they may convert public grievances to their own personal account. It was undertaken, not upon the broad basis of a wise and well-digested scheme, of which all the parts should contribute to the perfection of one consistent whole: it was carried on, not by those steady measures, founded on rational deliberation, which are calculated to accomplish so important an end; not with a temperance which indicated a sober love of law, or a sacred regard for religion; but with the most extravagant lust of power, and the most inordinate vanity which perhaps ever instigated human measures—a lust of power which threatens to extend its desolating

solating influence over the whole globe ; —a vanity of the same destructive species with that which stimulated the celebrated incendiary of Ephesus, who being weary of his native obscurity and insignificance, and preferring infamy to oblivion, could contrive no other road to fame and immortality, than that of setting fire to the exquisite Temple of Diana. He *was* remembered indeed, as he desired to be, but only to be execrated ; while the seventh wonder of the world lay prostrate through his crime.

It is the same over-ruling vanity which operates in their politics, and in their religion, which makes Kerfaint* boast of carrying his destructive projects from the Tagus to the Brazils, and from Mexico to the shores of the Ganges ; which makes him menace to outstrip the enterprizes of the most extravagant hero of romance,

* See his Speech, enumerating their intended projects.

and almost undertake with the marvelous celerity of the nimble-footed Puck,

“ To put a girdle round about the earth

“ In forty minutes.”——

It is the same vanity, still the master-passion in the bosom of a Frenchman, which leads Dupont and Manuel to undertake in their orations to abolish the Sabbath, exterminate the Priesthood, erect a Pantheon for the World, restore the Peripatetic Philosophy, and in short revive every thing of ancient Greece, except the pure taste, the wisdom, the love of virtue, the veneration of the laws, and that degree of reverence which even virtuous Pagans professed for the Deity.

It is surely to be charged to the inadequate and wretched hands into which the work of reformation fell, and not to the impossibility of amending the civil and religious

ligious institutions of France, that all has succeeded so ill. It cannot be denied perhaps, that a reforming spirit was wanted in that country; their government was not more despotic, than their church was superstitious and corrupt.

But though this is readily granted, and though it may be unfair to blame those who in the *first outset* of the French Revolution, rejoiced even on religious motives; yet it is astonishing, how any pious person, even with all the blinding power of prejudice, can think without horror of the *present* state of France. It is no less wonderful how any rational man could, even in the beginning of the Revolution, transfer that reasoning, however just it might be, when applied to France, to the case of England. For what can be more unreasonable, than to draw from different, and even opposite premises, the same conclusion? Must a re-
volution

volution be equally necessary in the case of two sorts of Government, and two sorts of Religion, which are the very reverse of each other?—opposite in their genius, unlike in their fundamental principles, and widely different in each of their component parts.

That despotism, priestcraft, intolerance, and superstition, are terrible evils, no candid Christian it is presumed will deny; but, blessed be God, though these mischiefs are not yet entirely banished from the face of the earth, they have scarcely any existence in this country.

To guard against a real danger, and to cure actual abuses, of which the existence has been first plainly proved, by the application of a suitable remedy, requires diligence as well as courage; observation as well as genius; patience and temperance as well as zeal and spirit. It requires the union
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of that clear head and sound heart which constitute the true patriot. But to conjure up fancied evils, or even greatly to aggravate real ones, and then to exhaust our labour in combating them, is the characteristic of a distempered imagination and an ungoverned spirit.

Romantic crusades, the ordeal trial, drowning of witches, the torture, and the inquisition, have been justly reprobated as the foulest stain of the respective periods in which, to the disgrace of human reason, they existed; but would any man be rationally employed, who should now stand up gravely to declaim against these as the predominating mischiefs of the present century? Even the whimsical Knight of La Mancha himself, would not fight windmills that were pulled down; yet I will venture to say, that the above-named evils are at present little more chimerical than some of those now so bitterly complained of among
us.

us. It is not as Dryden said, when one of his works was unmercifully abused, that the piece has not faults enough in it, but the critics have not had the wit to fix upon the right ones.

It is allowed that as a Nation, we have faults enough, but our political critics err in the objects of their censure. They say little of those real and pressing evils resulting from our own corruption, which constitute the actual miseries of life; while they gloomily speculate upon a thousand imaginary political grievances, and fancy that the reformation of our rulers and our legislators is all that is wanting to make us a happy people.

The principles of just and equitable government were, perhaps, never more fully established, nor public justice more exactly administered. Pure and undefiled religion was never laid more open to all,

than at this day. I wish I could say we were a religious people; but this at least may be safely asserted, that the great truths of religion were never better understood; that Christianity was never more completely stripped from all its incumbrances and disguises, or more thoroughly purged from human infusions, and whatever is debasing in human institutions.

In vain we look around us to discover the ravages of religious tyranny, or the triumphs of priestcraft or superstition. Who attempts to impose any yoke upon our reason? Who seeks to put any blind on the eyes of the most illiterate? Who fetters the judgment or enslaves the conscience of the meanest of our Protestant brethren? Nay, such is the power of pure Christianity to enlighten the understanding, as well as to reform the heart, and such are the advantages which the most abject in this country possess for enjoying its privileges, that the poorest peasant

peasant among us, if he be as religious as multitudes of his station really are, has clearer ideas of God and his own soul, purer notions of that true liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, than the mere disputer of this world, though he possess every splendid advantage which education, wisdom, and genius can bestow. I am not speaking either of a perfect form of Government, or a perfect Church Establishment, because I am speaking of Institutions which are human; and the very idea of their being human, involves also the idea of imperfection. But I am speaking of the best constituted Government, and the best constituted National Church with which we are yet acquainted. Time, that silent instructor, and Experience, that great rectifier of the judgment, will more and more discover to us what is wanting to the perfection of both. And if we may trust to the active genius of Christian Liberty, and

to that liberal and candid spirit which is the characteristic of the age we live in, there is little doubt but that a temperate and well-regulated zeal will, at a convenient season, correct whatsoever sound policy shall suggest as wise and expedient.

If there are errors in the Church, and it does not perhaps require the sharp-sightedness of a keen opposer to discover that there are, there is at least nothing like fierce intolerance, or spiritual usurpation. A fiery zeal and an uncharitable bigotry might have furnished matter for a well-deserved ecclesiastical philippic in other times ; but thanks to the temper of the present day, unless we conjure up a spirit of religious chivalry, and sally forth in quest of imaginary evils, we shall not apprehend any danger from persecution or enthusiasm. If grievances there are, they do not appear to be those which
result

result from polemic pride and rigid bigotry, but are of a kind far different.

If the warm sun of prosperity has unhappily produced its too common effect, in relaxing the vigour of religious exertion ; if, in too many instances, security has engendered sloth, and affluence produced dissipation ; let us implore the Divine grace, that the present alarming crisis may rouse the careless, and quicken the supine ; that our pastors may be convinced that the Church has less to fear from external violence, than from internal decay ; nay, that even the violence of attack is often really beneficial, by exciting that activity which enables us to repel danger, since increase of diligence is the truest accession of strength : that the love of power, with which their enemies perhaps unjustly accuse them, is not more fatal than the love of pleasure : that no degree of orthodoxy in opinion can atone for a too close affimi-

lation with the manners of the world ; that heresy without, is less to be dreaded than indifference from within : that the most regular clerical education, the most scrupulous attention to forms, and even the strictest conformity to the established opinions of the Church, will avail but little to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, without a strict spirit of personal watchfulness, habitual self-denial, and laborious exertion.

Though it is not here intended to animadvert on any political complaint which is not in some sort connected with religion ; yet it is presumed it may not be thought quite foreign to the present purpose to remark, that among the reigning complaints against our civil administration, the most plausible seems to be that excited by the supposed danger of an invasion on the Liberty of the Press. Were this apprehension well-founded, we should indeed be threatened by one of the most grievous misfortunes that can
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befall a free country. It is not only a most noble privilege itself, but the guardian of all our other liberties; and, notwithstanding the abuse which has lately been made of this valuable possession, yet every man of a sound unprejudiced mind is well aware that true liberty of every kind is scarcely inferior in importance to any object for which human activity can contend. Nay, the very abuse of a good, often makes us more sensible of its value. Fair and well-proportioned Freedom will ever retain all her native beauty to a judicious eye, nor will her genuine form be the less prized for our having lately contemplated the distorted features and false colouring of her caricature, as presented to us by the daubing hand of Gallic patriots.

But highly as the Freedom of the Press ought to be valued, would it really be so very heavy a misfortune, if corrupt and inflaming publications, calculated to destroy

that peace which every good man is anxious to preserve, should, just at this alarming period, be somewhat difficult to be obtained? Would it be so very grievous a national calamity, if the crooked progeny of treason and blasphemy should find it a little inconvenient to venture forth from their lurking-holes, and range abroad in open day? Is the cheapness of poison, or the facility with which it may be obtained, to be reckoned among the real advantages of medicinal repositories? And can the easiness of access to seditious or atheistical writings, be numbered among the substantial blessings of any country? Would France, at this day, have had much solid cause of regret, if many of the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and d'Alembert, (the prolific seed of their wide-spreading tree,) had found more difficulty in getting into the world, or been less profusely circulated when in it? And might not England at this moment have been just as happy in her ignorance,

ignorance, if the famous orations of Citizen Dupont and Citizen Manuel had been confined to their own enlightened and philosophical countries * ?

* *Extract from Mons. Manuel's Letter to the National Convention, dated January 26, 1793.*

“ The priests of a republic are its magistrates, the law its gospel. What mission can be more august than that of the instructors of youth, who having themselves escaped from the hereditary prejudice of all sects, point out to the human race their inalienable rights, founded upon that sublime wisdom which pervades all nature. Religious faith, impressed on the mind of an infant seven years old, will lead to perfect slavery; for dogmas at that age are only arbitrary commands. Ah! what is belief, without examination, without conviction? It renders men either melancholy or mad, &c.

“ Legislators! Virtue wants neither temples nor synagogues. It is not from priests we learn to do good or noble actions. No religion must be taught in schools which are to be national ones. To prescribe one, would be to prefer it to all others. There history must speak of sects, as she speaks of other events. It would become your wisdom, perhaps, to order that the pupils of the republic should not enter the temples before the age of seventeen. Reason must not be taken by surprise, &c. Hardly were children born before they fell into the hands of priests, who first blinded their eyes, and then delivered them over to kings. Wherever kings cease to govern, priests must cease to educate.”

To return to these orations:—We have too often, in our own nation, seen and deplored the mischiefs of irreligion, arising incidentally from a neglected or an abused education. But what mischiefs will not irreligion produce, when, in the projected schools of France, as announced to us by the two metaphysical legislators above-mentioned, impiety shall be taught by system? When out of the mouths of babes and sucklings the monstrous opinions, exhibited by Dupont and Manuel, shall be perfected? When the fruits of atheism, dropping from their newly-planted tree of liberty, shall pollute the very fountains of knowledge? When education, being poisoned in all her springs, the rising generation will be taught to look on atheism as decorous, and religion as eccentric? When atheism shall be considered as a proof of accomplished breeding, and religion as the stamp of a vulgar education? When the regular course of obedience

obedience to masters and tutors will be to renounce the hope of everlasting happiness, and to deride the idea of future punishment? When every man and every child, in conformity with the principles professed in the Convention, shall presume to say with his tongue, what hitherto even the fool has only dared to say in his heart, *That there is no God* *.

* It is a remarkable circumstance, that though the French are continually binding themselves by oaths, they have not mentioned the name of God in any oath which has been invented since the revolution. It may also appear curious to the English reader, that though in almost all the addresses of congratulation, which were sent by the associated clubs from this country to the National Convention, the success of the French arms was in part ascribed to Divine Providence, yet in none of the answers was the least notice ever taken of this. And to shew how the same spirit spreads itself among every description of men in France, their Admiral Latouche, after having described the dangers to which his ship was exposed in a storm, says, *we owe our existence to the tutelary Genius which watches over the destiny of the French republic, and the defenders of liberty and equality.*

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My fellow Christians! This is not a strife of words; this is not a controversy about opinions of comparatively small importance, such as you have been accustomed at home to hear even good men dispute upon, when perhaps they would have acted a more wise and amiable part had they remained silent, sacrificing their mutual differences on the altar of Christian charity: But this bold renunciation of the first great fundamental article of faith, this daring rejection of the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the World, is striking with a vigorous stroke at the root of all human happiness. It is tearing up the very foundation of human hope, and extirpating every true principle of human excellence. It is annihilating the very existence of virtue, by annihilating its motives, its sanctions, its obligations, and its end.

That atheism will be the favoured and the popular tenet in France seems highly probable;

probable; whilst in that wild contempt of all religion, which has lately had the arrogance to call itself toleration, it is not improbable that Christianity itself may be tolerated in that country, as a sect not persecuted indeed, but derided. It is, however, far from clear, that this will be the case, if the new doctrines should become generally prevalent; although the great apostles of infidelity, Voltaire and his disciples, have employed all the acuteness of their wit to convince us that irreligion never persecutes. To prove this, every art of false citation, partial extract, suppressed evidence, and gross misrepresentation has been put in practice. But if this unsupported assertion were true, then Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin, Cyprian, and Basil, did not suffer for the faith once delivered to the Saints. Then the famous Christian apologists, most of them learned converts from the pagan philosophy, idly employed their zeal to abate a clamour which did not exist,

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and to propitiate emperors who did not persecute. Then Tacitus, Trajan, Pliny, and Julian, those bitter enemies to Christianity, are suborned witnesses on her side. Then Ecclesiastical History is a series of falsehoods, and the Book of Martyrs a legend of romance*.

That one extravagant mischief should produce its opposite, is agreeable to the ordinary course of human events. That to the credulity of a dark and superstitious religion, a wanton contempt of all decency, and an unbridled prophaneness, should succeed; that to a government abso-

* It may be objected here, that this is not applicable to the state of France; for that the Roman Emperors were not atheists or deists, but polytheists, with an established religion. To this it may be answered, that modern infidels not only deny the ten pagan persecutions, but accuse Christianity of being the only persecuting religion; and affirm, that only those who refuse to embrace it, discover a spirit of toleration.

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lutely despotic, an utter abhorrence of all restraint and subordination should follow; though it is deplorable, yet it is not strange. The human mind, in flying from the extreme verge of one error, seldom stops till she has reached the opposite extremity. She generally passes by with a lofty disdain the obvious truth which lies directly in her road, and which is indeed commonly to be found in the mid-way, between the error she is flying from, and the error she is pursuing.

Is it a breach of Christian charity to conclude, from a view of the present state of the French, that since that deluded people have given up GOD, GOD, by a righteous retribution, seems to have renounced them for a time, and to have given them over to their own hearts lusts, *to work iniquity with greediness*? If such is their present

sent career, what is likely to be their appointed end? How fearfully applicable to them seems that awful denunciation against an ancient, offending people—"The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart!"

It is no part of the present design to enter into a detail of their political conduct; but I cannot omit to remark, that the very man in their long list of kings, who seemed best to have deserved their assumed appellation of *most Christian*, was also most favourable to their acquisition of liberty*: his moderation and humanity facilitated their power, which, with unparalleled ingratitude, they employed to degrade his person and character in the eyes of mankind,

* Of this the French themselves were so well persuaded, that the title of *Restorateur de la Liberté Française*, was solemnly given to Louis the XVIth by the Constituent Assembly.

by the blackest and most detestable arts, and at length to terminate his calamities by a crime which has excited the grief and indignation of all Europe.

On the trial and murder of that most unfortunate king, and on the inhuman proceedings which accompanied them, I shall purposely avoid dwelling, for it is not the design of these remarks to excite the passions. I will only say, that so monstrous has been the inversion of all order, law, humanity, justice, received opinion, good faith, and religion, that the conduct of his bloody executioners seems to have exhibited the most scrupulous conformity with the principles announced in the speeches we have been considering. In this one instance we must not call the French an inconsequent people. Savage brutality, treason, and murder have been the noxious fruit gathered from these thorns; the baneful pro-

duce of these thistles. An overturn of all morals has been the well-proportioned offspring of an inversion of all principle.

But, notwithstanding the consistency, in this instance, between cause and consequence, so new and surprising have been the turns in their extraordinary projects, that to foretel what their next enterprise would be from what their last has been, has long baffled all calculation, and bid defiance to all conjecture. Analogy from history, a study of past events, and an investigation of present principles and passions; judgment, memory, and deduction, afford human sagacity but very slender assistance in its endeavours to develope their future plans. We have not even the data of consistent wickedness on which to build rational conclusions. Their crimes, though visibly connected by uniform depravity, are yet so surprisingly diversified by interfering

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ing absurdities, as to furnish no ground on which reasonable argument can be founded. Nay, such is their incredible eccentricity, that it is hardly extravagant to affirm, that improbability is become rather an additional reason for expecting an event to take place.

But let us, in this yet happy country, learn at least one great and important truth, from the errors of this distracted people. Their conduct has awfully illustrated a position, which is not the less sound for having been often controverted, That no degree of wit and learning; no progress in commerce; no advances in the knowledge of nature, or in the embellishments of art, can ever thoroughly tame that savage, the natural human heart, without RELIGION. The arts of social life may give a sweetness

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to the manners and language, and induce, in some degree, a love of justice, truth, and humanity ; but attainments derived from such inferior causes are no more than the semblance and the shadow of the qualities derived from pure Christianity. Varnish is an extraneous ornament, but true polish is a proof of the solidity of the body ; it depends greatly on the nature of the substance, is not superinduced by accidental causes, but in a good measure proceeding from internal foundations.

The poets of that country, whose style, sentiments, manners, and religion the French so affectedly labour to imitate, have left keen and biting satires on the Roman vices. Against the late proceedings in France, no satirist need employ his pen ; that of the historian will be quite sufficient. Fact will put fable out of countenance ; and the crimes which are usually held up to
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our abhorrence in works of invention, will be regarded as flat and feeble by those who shall peruse the records of the tenth of August, of the second and third of September, and of the twenty-first of January.

If the same astonishing degeneracy in taste, principle, and practice, should ever come to flourish among *us*, Britain may still live to exult in the desolation of her cities, and in the destruction of her finest monuments of art; she may triumph in the peopling of the fortresses of her rocks and her forests; may exult in being once more restored to that glorious state of *liberty and equality*, when all subsisted by rapine and the chase; when all, O enviable privilege! were equally savage, equally indigent, and equally naked; may extol it as the restoration of reason, and the triumph of nature, that they are again brought to feed on acorns, instead of bread. Groves of

consecrated mistletoe may happily succeed to useless corn-fields; and Thor and Woden may hope once more to be invested with all their bloody honours.

Let not any serious readers feel indignation, as if pains were ungenerously taken to involve their religious, with their political opinions. Far be it from me to wound, unnecessarily, the feelings of people whom I so sincerely esteem; but it is much to be suspected, that certain opinions in politics have a tendency to lead to certain opinions in religion. Where so much is at stake, they will do well to keep their consciences tender, in order to which they should try to keep their discernment acute. They will do well to observe, that the same restless spirit of innovation is busily operating under various, though seemingly unconnected forms. To observe, that the same impatience of restraint, the same contempt of order, peace, and subordination, which
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makes men bad citizens, makes them bad Christians ; and that to this secret, but almost infallible connexion between religious and political sentiment, does France owe her present unparalleled anarchy and impiety.

There are doubtless in that unhappy country multitudes of virtuous and reasonable men, who rather silently acquiesce in the authority of their present turbulent government, than embrace its principles or promote its projects from the sober conviction of their own judgment. These, together with those conscientious exiles whom this nation so honourably protects, may yet live to rejoice in the restoration of true liberty and solid peace to their native country, when light and order shall spring from the present darkness and confusion, and the reign of chaos shall be no more.

May I be permitted a short digression on the subject of these exiles ? It shall only be

to remark, that all the boasted conquests of our Edwards and our Henrys over the French nation, do not confer such substantial glory on our own country, as she derives from having received, protected, and supported, among multitudes of other sufferers, at a time and under circumstances so peculiarly disadvantageous to herself, *three thousand priests*, of a nation habitually her enemy, and of a religion intolerant and hostile to her own. This is the solid triumph of true Christianity ; and it is worth remarking, that the deeds which poets and historians celebrate as rare and splendid actions, and sublime instances of greatness of soul, in the heroes of the Pagan world, are but the ordinary and habitual virtues which occur in the common course of action among Christians; quietly performed without effort or exertion, and with no view to renown ; but resulting naturally and necessarily from the religion they profess.

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So predominating is the power of an example we have once admired, and set up as a standard of imitation, and so fascinating has been the ascendancy of the Convention over the minds of those whose approbation of French politics commenced in the earlier periods of the Revolution, that it extends to the most trivial circumstances. I cannot forbear to notice this in an instance which, though inconsiderable in itself, yet ceases to be so when we view it in the light of a symptom of the reigning disease.

While the fantastic phraseology of the new Republic is such, as to be almost as disgusting to sound taste, as their doctrines are to sound morals, it is curious to observe how deeply the addresses, which have been sent to it from the Clubs* in this country,

* See the Collection of Addresses from England.

have been infected with it, as far at least as phrases and terms are objects of imitation. In other respects, it is but justice to the French Convention to confess, that they are hitherto without rivals and without imitators; for who can aspire to emulate that compound of anarchy and atheism which in their debates is mixed up with the pedantry of school-boys, the jargon of a cabal, and the vulgarity and ill-breeding of a mob? One instance of the prevailing cant may suffice, where an hundred might be adduced; and it is not the most exceptionable.—To demolish every existing law and establishment; to destroy the fortunes and ruin the principles of every country into which they are carrying their destructive arms and their frantic doctrines; to untie or cut asunder every bond which holds society together; to impose their own arbitrary shackles where they succeed, and to demolish every thing where they fail:—This desolating system,

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by a most unaccountable perversion of language, they are pleased to call by the endearing name of *fraternization*; and fraternization is one of the favourite terms which their admirers have adopted. Little would a simple stranger, uninitiated in this new and surprising dialect, imagine that the peaceful terms of fellow-citizen and of brother, the winning offer of freedom and happiness, and the warm embrace of fraternity, were only watch-words by which they, in effect,

Cry havoc,
And let slip the dogs of war.

In numberless other instances, the fashionable language of France at this day would be as unintelligible to the correct writers of the age of Louis the XIVth, as their fashionable notions of liberty would be irreconcilable with those of the true Revolution Patriots

triot of his great contemporary and victorious rival, William the Third.

Such is indeed their puerile rage for novelty in the invention of new words, and the perversion of their taste in the use of old ones, that the celebrated Vossius, whom Christine of Sweden oddly complimented by saying, that he was so learned as not only to know whence all words came, but whither they were going, would, *were he admitted to the honours of a sitting*, be obliged to confess, that he was equally puzzled to tell the one, or to foretel the other.

If it shall please the Almighty in his anger to let loose this infatuated people, as a scourge for the iniquities of the human race; if they are delegated by infinite justice to act, as storm and tempest fulfilling
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his word ; if they are commissioned to perform the errand of the destroying lightning or the avenging thunder-bolt, let us try at least to extract personal benefit from national calamity ; let every one of us, high and low, rich and poor, enter upon this serious and humbling inquiry, how much his own individual offences have contributed to that awful aggregate of public guilt, which has required such a visitation. Let us carefully examine in what proportion we have separately added to that common stock of abounding iniquity, the description of which formed the character of an ancient nation, and is so peculiarly applicable to our own—*Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.* Let every one of us humbly inquire, in the self-suspecting language of the disciples to their Divine Master—*Lord, is it I?* Let us learn to fear the fleets and
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armies of the enemy, much less than those iniquities at home which this alarming dispensation may be intended to chastize.

The war which the French have declared against us, is of a kind altogether unexampled in every respect ; infomuch that human wisdom is baffled when it would pretend to conjecture what may be the event. But this at least we may safely say, that it is not so much the force of French bayonets, as the contamination of French principles, that ought to excite our apprehensions. We trust, that through the blessing of God we shall be defended from their open hostilities, by the temperate wisdom of our Rulers, and the bravery of our fleets and armies ; but the domestic danger arising from licentious and irreligious principles among ourselves, can only be guarded against by the personal care and vigilance of every one of us
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who values religion and the good order of society.

GOD grant that those who go forth to fight our battles, instead of being intimidated by the number of their enemies, may bear in mind, that "there is no restraint with GOD to save by many or by few." And let the meanest of us who remains at home remember also, that even he may contribute to the internal safety of his country, by the integrity of his private life, and to the success of her defenders, by following them with his fervent prayers. And in what war can the sincere Christian ever have stronger inducements to pray for the success of his country, than in this? Without entering far into any political principles, the discussion of which would be in a great measure foreign to the design of this little tract, it may be remarked, that the unchristian principle of revenge is not our motive to this war; conquest is not our object;

object; nor have we had recourse to hostility, in order to effect a change in the internal government of France*. The present war is undoubtedly undertaken entirely on defensive principles. It is in defence of our King, our Constitution, our Religion, our Laws, and consequently our *Liberty*, in the sound and rational sense of that term. It is to defend ourselves from the savage violence of a crusade, made against all Religion, as well as all Government. If ever therefore a war was undertaken on the ground of self-defence and necessity—if ever men might be literally said to fight *pro ARIS et focis*, this seems to be the occasion.

The ambition of conquerors has been the source of great and extensive evils: religious fanaticism, of still greater. But little as I am disposed to become the apologist of

* See the Report of Mr. Pitt's Speech in the House of Commons on Feb. 12, 1793, published by Woodfall.

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either the one principle or the other, there is no extravagance in asserting, that they have seemed incapable of producing, even in ages, that extent of mischief, that comprehensive desolation, which *philosophy, falsely so called*, has produced in three years.

Christians! it is not a small thing—*it is your life*. The pestilence of irreligion which you detest, will insinuate itself imperceptibly with those manners, phrases, and principles which you admire and adopt. It is the humble wisdom of a Christian, to shrink from the most distant approaches to sin, to abstain from the very appearance of evil. If we would fly from the deadly contagion of Atheism, let us fly from those seemingly remote, but not very indirect paths which lead to it. Let France chuse this day whom she will serve; *but, as for us and our houses, we will serve the Lord.*

And, O gracious and long-suffering God! before that awful period arrives,
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which shall exhibit the dreadful effects of such an education as the French nation are instituting; before a race of men can be trained up, not only without the knowledge of THEE, but in the contempt of THY most holy law, do THOU, in great mercy, change the heart of this people as the heart of one man. Give them not finally over to their own corrupt imaginations, to their own hearts' lusts. But after having made them a fearful example to all the nations of the earth, what a people *can* do, who have cast off the fear of THEE, do THOU graciously bring them back to a sense of that law which they have violated, and to a participation of that mercy which they have abused; so that they may happily find, while the discovery can be attended with consolation, that *doubtless there is a reward for the righteous; verily, there is a GOD who judgeth the earth.*

THE END.



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